

REMARKS

The amendments to the specification are being made to correct typographical errors that existed in the original case. The existence of the typographical error is readily apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of the fact that polymers can't readily achieve densities as high as 50 kg/cm^3 (especially foams can't achieve such high densities), the results of Table 1A, which show foams having densities of less than 50 kg/m^3 , and the fact that the values for densities of foams listed in the specification are in terms of kg/m^3 .

Claims 1, 10, 12, 13, and 14 have been amended. Claim 9 has been cancelled. Support for the above amendments to the claims may be found, for example, at page 20, lines 21 through 24 and lines 25 through 30 and Tables 1A and 1B.

Rejections of the Claims Under 35 USC Sections 102 and 103:

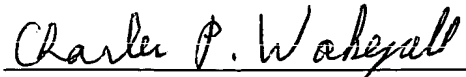
The Examiner rejected the originally filed claims under 35 USC Sections 102(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,417,242 B1 issued July 9, 2002 to Hughes et al. ("Hughes"). The Examiner further rejected the originally filed claims under 35 USC Section 103 (a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 5,324,753 issued June 28, 1994 to Lesca et al. ("Lesca"), alone, or taken with Hughes.

The Applicants' have amended the claims to overcome these rejections as set forth above. None of the cited art teaches or suggests the invention of Applicants' amended Claim 1, which together with the other properties listed, recites a foam having: a density of 50 kg/m³ or less, which foam exhibits an Asker-C hardness of 35 or less and a Compressive Strength of 103 kPa or less. Furthermore, none of the cited art teaches or suggested the invention of Applicants' amended Claim 12 (a process for making a foam having the above-delineated unique properties), Claim 13 (a process for making thermoplastic foam beads having the above-delineated unique properties), or Claim 14 (an expandable composition capable of forming a foam having the above-delineated unique properties).

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of all the Pending Claims have been overcome by amendment and that the Claims are in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request that the Claims be reexamined and that the rejections be withdrawn and respectfully urge that all the pending claims be allowed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,


Charles P. Wakefield
Registration No. 37,749
Phone: 979-238-2567

P. O. Box 1967
Midland, Michigan 48641-1967

CPW/alb